

Recap of the East Town Business Partnership Business Forum Company Best Practices in Commuter Benefits

(<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/November-21-Business-Forum-Transit-at-Meet-Minneapolis-Dan-Collison.pdf>)

**Tuesday, November 21, 2019, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Meet Minneapolis, 801 Marquette Avenue South, Suite 100
Downtown West Neighborhood of Minneapolis**

I. Welcome and Introductions

John Campobasso, ETBP President and Vice President and Manager of Business Development at Kraus-Anderson, welcomed the audience and asked everyone to introduce themselves:

- Carina Aleckson, Catholic Charities
- Becky Alper, Move Minneapolis
- Jacquie Berglund, FINNEGANS
- Paul Dosen, Hyatt Place Minneapolis Downtown
- Chris Fleck, North Central University
- Kim Forbes, Minnesota Adult & Teen Challenge, Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc.
- Brianna Gabriel, Hyatt Place Minneapolis Downtown
- Christie Rock Hantge, ETBP Staff
- Cyndy Harrison, Sawatdee Thai Restaurant
- Gena Janetka, Allied Parking, Inc.
- Varun Kharbanda, Moxy Minneapolis Downtown
- Kory Kingsbury, Renaissance Hotel and Residence Inn at The Depot Minneapolis
- Michael Krantz, Metropolitan Transit
- Ksenia Kuhn, Grand Hotel Minneapolis
- Julia Lauwagie, Minnesota Adult & Teen Challenge
- Brian Maupin, Allied Parking, Inc.
- Pamela McCrea, Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association
- Andy McDermott, ESG Architects
- Justin Merkovich, ESG Architects
- Hayley Mueller, Catholic Charities
- Tricia Nelson, FINNEGANS
- Ed Neumann, American Red Cross Minnesota volunteer
- Roger Raina, National Item Processing
- Sarah Reno, Meet Minneapolis
- Anne Snyder, Allied Parking
- Carletta Sweet, Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Organization
- Al Swintek, CenterPoint Energy
- Melvin Tennant, Meet Minneapolis
- Rosemary Ugboajah, Neka Creative
- Joe Videle, Pulse Movement
- Matthew Weiland, Clear Channel Outdoor
- Chad Wilson, Duluth Real Estate Professional

Then out of gratitude, ETBP Executive Director Dan Collison prefaced the following introductions by explaining North Central University's College of Business and Technology has leaned in to provide pro bono assistance to help promote the ETBP's mission, work, and the many narratives of East Town through social media marketing.

- Eden DeMell (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/eden-demell-6232b4194>), an Entrepreneurship major.
- Hannah Ady (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/hannah-ady>), a Business Administration major.
- Bill Tibbetts, Dean (<https://www.northcentral.edu/academics/college-schools-and-departments/college-of-business-and-technology/>), advised he's been with NCU for 12 years and NCU has been in Elliot Park since 1936 (<https://www.northcentral.edu/about/history/>). They're excited to be a part of the ETBP in this capacity and their role is help fulfill the ETBP's mission by capturing the beauty and stories of East Town from the

businesses to nonprofits, from the residents to entertainment and promoting them through Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. Then he encouraged everyone to forward their stories to his attention.

Collison announced they are kicking off this year-long campaign today and encouraged everyone to be bold and introduce themselves to the Membership, Marketing and Communication Committee chaired by Chris Fleck.

II. **Business Spotlight: Meet Minneapolis**

After Collison thanked Meet Minneapolis for hosting, Melvin Tennant, CEO (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/melvin-tennant-ii-ma-cae-08a79a8>), introduced himself and congratulated Collison for all the great work he does in representing the ETBP. MM has hosted the ETBP before at its former location in Marquette Plaza which they moved from in 2018 and recently celebrated a 1-year anniversary in their new space (<https://www.bizjournals.com/twincities/news/2019/04/23/cool-offices-with-its-new-office-tourism-bureau.html#g/452784/10>). They've tried to make it home by using a lot of local artisans and craftspeople which the audience is welcome to view following the forum, e.g.: two installations of hand painted wallpaper near the kitchen depicting the iconic Spoonbridge and Cherry and Stone Arch Bridge is by She She (<https://www.facebook.com/pg/bysheshe/services/>); the receptionist's desk was built by Gomez Whitney (<https://www.gomezwhitney.com/2017/8/1/gw>); all tile is by Mercury Mosaics (<https://mercurymosaics.com/>); some of the light fixtures are by Hennepin Made (<https://mercurymosaics.com/>); and the 60' mural that extends almost the length of MM depicting neighborhood and sports scenes is by Heather Novak Peterson (<http://www.hjnovak.com/>).

Tennant gave an overview of the organization (<https://www.minneapolis.org/about-us/>); it's had the same mission since it was founded in 1987 as a 501(c)(6) (<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/other-non-profits/business-leagues>). Seventy-five percent of its funding is through a contract with the City. There are over 70 staff, not all of whom work out of this location, e.g., some are at the Minneapolis Convention Center, several are in Washington, D.C., one in Florida, and there's a 35 member board (<https://www.minneapolis.org/about-us/board/>).

Then he highlighted the following 2020 and beyond events:

- NCAA Division I Wrestling Championships at U.S. Bank Stadium, March 19-21, 2020 (<https://www.minneapolis.org/ncaa-wrestling-championships/>). This will be the first time in its history to be played in a stadium and MM believes it will break the collegiate attendance record for wrestling.
- Northern Lights Volleyball Qualifier at the Minneapolis Convention Center, various dates in January 31-April 26, 2020 (<https://www.northernlightsjuniors.org/events/northern-lights-qualifier/>).
- United Methodist Church's General Conference at the MCC, May 5-15, 2020 (<https://gc2020welcome.org/>).
- X Games returns for its fourth and final year at U.S. Bank Stadium, July 16-19, 2020 (<https://www.minneapolis.org/x-games/>).
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Triennial Youth Gathering at U.S. Bank Stadium and the MCC, June 29-July 3, 2021 (<https://www.elca.org/YouthGathering>). Those in the hotel business know we just had the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod Youth Gathering this summer (<https://calendar.lcms.org/event/2019-lcms-youth-gathering/>), and the ELCA promises to be even larger.
- Shriners International return for its 150th Imperial Session in 2022 (<https://imperialsession.com/pages/future-sessions/>).
- They're working on the next World's Fair bid (<http://www.expobids.com/>) with other communities within the metro area. It's very preliminary, but if it happens it will be a game changer.

Responding to Collison's question about how they conduct outreach and compete with other convention centers, Tennant advised they have a multifaceted sales and marketing program which is being finalized for 2020. It involves many components of direct sales, e.g., dialing customers, attending trade shows, and they also have a very active and comprehensive marketing program, e.g., print, events such as The Purple Session: A Prince Birthday Celebration with DJ Dredd (<https://www.ticketfly.com/purchase/event/1857461>) held in D.C. As they compete with other cities around the country and the world, the trend is visitors want to experience a city like the locals do so MM wants to present the real Minneapolis through neighborhood

activities unique to Minneapolis.

Lastly, Collison gave a shout out to Tennant's destination and marketing team which takes time to build the narrative around the neighborhoods, particularly in the downtown environment where they are a lot of the hotels with which they partner.

III. Announcements

Collision explained the ETBP is a lean, mean and effective machine and is grateful to its membership across all levels. He gave a special acknowledgement to the following platinum sponsors who help put extra fuel in their tank to accomplish their goals:

- American Academy of Neurology
- Catholic Charities
- CenterPoint Energy
- Clear Channel Outdoor
- Community Housing Development Corporation
- ESG Architects
- Hennepin Healthcare
- House of Charity
- Kraus-Anderson
- Minnesota Vikings
- North Central University
- Padilla
- People Serving People
- Sherman Associates
- Sherwin Williams
- Thrivent Financial
- U.S. Bank
- Wells Fargo

Then he announced the following events:

- Next month's business forum is being held jointly with the Minneapolis Downtown Council on **Tuesday**, December 17th, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., at Elliot Park Hotel. It will feature some of our regional experts on *Including One Another as Diverse Identities in the Workplace*.
- Elliot Park Art Walk (https://www.elliottpark.org/elliott_park_art_walk) in conjunction with FINNEGANS first annual Festival of Lights (<https://finnegans.org/event/finnegans-festival-of-lights/>) on Saturday, December 7th, 4:00-7:00 p.m.
- The unleashing of 205 Bark, the newest public dog park at The Vicinity Apartments (<http://millcitytimes.com/mill-city-minneapolis-events/december-3-2019-tuesday-205-bark-unleashing-event-at-the-vac.html>) on Tuesday, December 3rd, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
- The 2019-2020 dates have been announced for inline skating and indoor running at U.S. Bank Stadium (https://www.usbankstadium.com/events/detail/winter-warm-up?fbclid=IwAR3Sp_r9XC8BPonZo8IWMSXb8LLZr-PUNvdOiFE5FZHDcO6H6-Fn_qg-D_U).
- For holiday shopping, visit *Chameleon Shoppes* (<https://www.chameleonconsortium.com/shopping-sprees/>), a joint effort of the ETBP and MDC and pro bono support from sponsoring partners such as Neka Creative (<https://www.nekacreative.com/>) which provided their marketing and branding expertise and helped launched this pop-up effort in April to bring diverse businesses into vacant retail spaces in

downtown Minneapolis. Currently there are over 30 businesses in three locations: ground and skyway level in Gaviidae Common, and skyway level in the IDS Center.

- Hennepin Healthcare's Light Up the Night fundraiser on Friday, December 6th, reception beginning at 6:00 p.m., at The Armory Minneapolis (<https://www.hennepinhealthcare.org/hennepin-healthcare-foundation/light-up-the-night/>).
- Neighborhood association meetings:
 - For Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association Board and Land Use Committee meetings as well as other events, visit <http://www.thedmna.org/>.
 - For Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc., Building, Land Use and Housing (BLUH) meetings as well as other events, visit <https://www.elliottpark.org/>.
- Coffee with Council Member Steve Fletcher is held on *Wednesdays, 5:00-6:30 p.m.* at varying locations within Ward 3 (<https://www.facebook.com/pg/FletcherMpls/events/>).
- The ETBP business forum schedule has been updated to include *The History of News Makers in East Town: The Star Tribune Story* at Wells Fargo in January 2020; and *What You May Not Know About the Minneapolis Federal Reserve* at U.S. Stadium in February 2020. For more information, visit <https://easttownmpls.org/calendar/2019-2020-business-forum-season/>.
- For help in navigating City Hall with your business questions, visit the Minneapolis Business Portal at <https://business.minneapolismn.gov/> which is designed to connect entrepreneurs and small business owners to the information and resources needed to plan, launch and grow a business.

The Small Business Team is conducting open houses at various locations throughout the city. The nearest to the ETBP are held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., at the Central Library. For more information, call 612-673-2499 or send an email to smallbusiness@minneapolismn.gov (<https://business.minneapolismn.gov/contact>).

IV. Transit Oriented Development

(https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/2019.11.21_MetroTransit.TOD_EastTown-Read-Only.pdf)

Collison prefaced this presentation by advising this is the ETBP's 40th anniversary as an organization which began in Elliot Park and grew to include Downtown East when the economic development along the riverfront sprouted up. Now the ETBP stewards, spotlights, and celebrates the works of both our beautiful neighborhoods of Downtown East and Elliot Parks as part of the East Town narrative. Today we're getting the history of the most massive public transit investment, i.e., Light Rail Transit, that kicked off some of the development we see today. The U.S. Bank Stadium Station (<https://www.metrotransit.org/us-bank-stadium-station>) is where the Blue and Green Lines first intersect in downtown Minneapolis.

Michael Krantz, TOD Development Analyst (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/michael-krantz-pe-leed-ap-nd-86390919>), advised their office was established in April 2014

(https://www.metrotransit.org/Data/Sites/1/media/tod/timeline_tod.pdf) and their work falls into the following four buckets:

- Create TOD projects on Metropolitan Council-owned land. Allianz Field (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allianz_Field) for the Minnesota United Football Club (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minnesota_United_FC) is one of the first projects and they're still working on it because there's a lot of development that wants to happen there.

- Convene internal and external TOD community and hold forums on TOD topics, the latest being on low and no parking development that's happening in Minneapolis since it changed its zoning codes (<https://www.metrotransit.org/TOD-Events> and <https://www.metrotransit.org/developers-see-future-with-more-people-less-parking>).
- Provide on website best practices, research, lessons from other places (<https://www.metrotransit.org/tod-developer-tools-and-resources>).
- Work with partner jurisdictions on TOD and connect the development community with Metropolitan Council resources, e.g., in 2014 and 2016 received federal grants for station area planning along the Gold Line (<http://thegatewaycorridor.com/station-area-planning/>) and Blue Line Extension (<https://metro council.org/transportation/projects/Light-Rail-Projects/METRO-Blue-Line-Extension/Project-Partners.aspx>), both of which are underway.

Krantz gave the history of the Blue Line, the first LRT route in the state that was selected back in 1985; it would be 19 years until operations began. The cost was \$715 million, and if adjusted for inflation today it would be ~\$1 billion, 60 percent of which was covered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the rest by state and local sources. That 60 percent is quite a bit more than what they're covering on most of these capital projects today. They exceeded the 2020 ridership forecast within 5 years of its opening, but it wasn't until around 2012 that they began to see a steady increase in ridership on the Blue Line again and that corresponds with when the Green Line opened and a lot more development co-locating with a large capital investment which he expects to see continue trend gradually upward.

And then the history of the Green Line, the route of which was selected in 2006 or 2 years after the Blue Line opened. The Green Line opened in 2014 at a cost just shy of \$1 billion, half of which was covered by the FTA, more in line with what they're seeing on some projects today. There were many challenges associated with it, e.g., the University of Minnesota originally wanted it to run around the campus which would have rendered it useless for the students, but the stations now serving it (West Bank, East Bank, Stadium Village) have the highest ridership in the system. Other challenges included Minnesota Public Radio's noise and vibration lawsuit (<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2011/11/04/mpr-light-rail-lawsuit>); and St. Paul's Rhondo neighborhood's desire to have more stations (<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2011/11/04/mpr-light-rail-lawsuit>). FTA funding formula at the time meant adding stations might compromise MT's ability to receive funding; however, as a result of the conversation with this project, the FTA changed the way they considered federal funding and allowed them to add those stations. Ridership on the Green Line was always expected to be higher than on the Blue Line and they have already regularly exceeded the 2030 forecast and they expect it to continue to increase because of a lot of TOD along this line.

Then he highlighted statistics taken from their Development Trends Along Transit 2019 report (<https://www.metrotransit.org/TOD-Studies-and-Projects>), using permitted data taken from partner jurisdictions from the previous year to track residential, commercial, public/institution, and industrial development along transit. It reflects the market- and policy-driven tendency to build multifamily residential development along high frequency transit. For downtown Minneapolis, development really picked up after 2012, and since then they've seen on average about \$0.5 billion annually, and based on planned development they expect that average to continue.

Thereafter, he answered a few questions from the audience. For more information, Krantz can be reached at Michael.Krantz@metrotransit.org.

V. Move Minneapolis

(<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/East-Town-Business-Association-Move-Mpls-11-21-2019-Read-Only.pdf>)

Collison prefaced this presentation by explaining it's part of a series ETBP developed titled *Critical*

Concerns for the Marketplace. Today's presentation is related to the rapidly changing reality of people coming and going from downtown, and in this case, how transit is leveraged to hit the bottom line of a company and employee recruitment and retention. He extended super props to Move Minneapolis and the whole team for the market science they've applied to tackle moving more than 200,000 people, not including visitors, to and from downtown on a daily basis. More companies are waking up to the multiple ways in which to build it into their business model.

Becky Alper, Outreach Manager (<https://moveminneapolis.org/about-us-staff-2/>), advised they provide transportation resources to employers located in downtown to help out with drive-alone commute. This year they became part of the Minneapolis Regional Chamber (<https://business.mplschamber.com/news/details/emphasizing-the-importance-of-transit-minneapolis-regional-chamber-and-move-minneapolis-merge>). Then she shared some of the 2019 activities they've done with some of the members in the audience as well as best practices they've seen here in Minneapolis.

MM educates companies and employees on the region's growing transit options, conducts behavior change workshops, and hosts an annual Transportation Summit (<https://moveminneapolis.org/move-minneapolis-2018-transportation-summit/>); stayed tuned for information about next year's summit.

Because there are over 200,000 employees and 50,000 residents in downtown and only 62,000 parking spaces, there's simply not enough parking for everyone to drive downtown and store their cars. Therefore, there are many reasons why it's important to discuss best practices for commuting to and from downtown Minneapolis in order to ensure it's a place that's welcoming for people with all abilities. MM believes this math problem is okay because it shows downtown is thriving and gives them an incredible opportunity to work with employers across downtown to encourage their employees to use different modes of transportation.

The way downtown employers incent (i.e., the carrots) employees into taking different modes of transportation include: (1) it's no longer the norm to offer free parking and it's increasingly common to get out of the business of managing/owning parking; (2) offering Metropass (<https://www.metrotransit.org/metro-pass>) is the most common, has commute time clock-in policy and flexible work schedules; (3) promoting carpooling (<https://www.metrotransit.org/carpool>); and (4) guaranteeing a ride home (<https://www.metrotransit.org/guaranteed-ride-home>).

Alper then gave an overview and implications of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 workshop (<https://moveminneapolis.org/2019/10/transportation-workshop-series-nov-19/>) held on November 19th at HGA.

Lastly, she described their Move Like a Boss campaign (<https://moveminneapolis.org/movelikeaboss-2/>); and Car-Free MSP Day (<https://moveminneapolis.org/car-free-msp-landing/>), the next being on September 22, 2020.

Even if taking transit doesn't work for you, supporting your colleagues' non-driving commute benefits everyone in the entire metro area. There's a lot they're hoping to do in 2020 to help Minneapolis downtown businesses continue to thrive and grow, decrease congestion and improve air quality.

Thereafter, she answered a few questions from the audience and made available two transit vouchers for those interested. For more information, Alper can be reached at becky@moveminneapolis.org or 612-370-9101.

VI. Closing Remarks

Collison thanked Move Minneapolis for hosting, the speakers for their presentations, and the audience for attending. He reminded everyone that the next business forum held jointly with the Minneapolis Downtown Council is on **Tuesday**, December 17th at the Elliot Park Hotel. Lastly, he wished everyone a great week and Thanksgiving!